

OUR SCHOOLS

Our children are our future, so we visited schools in the Manawatū and Tararua regions to talk about Te Ahu a Turanga: Manawatū Tararua Highway project.

The visits were useful for us as we learned a lot about how children and their families are affected by the closure of the old State Highway 3 through Manawatū Gorge. Most of the students we talked to remembered driving through the Manawatū Gorge and were interested in what the future holds. We showed them a video of the animated fly-through over the new road, and a series of video clips about the variety of work going on before major construction begins.

We presented to about 600 students in total, and we'll keep working with interested schools as the project continues.



NZ Transport Agency senior safety engineer Dan Tate speaks to children at Ashhurst School.

WHAT DID WE TALK ABOUT?

The main focus of our school presentations was on the pre-construction works that often go unnoticed by the public. There are a range of activities that are currently being carried out in preparation for main construction works beginning, including:

- bat monitoring
- stream and water testing
- geological and geophysical testing.

These works tell us about the current state of the local environment and what we may or may not need to do to look after it as part of the project.

Bats were a big hit among the students with many showing concern for their welfare. The long-tailed and short-tailed bats are New Zealand's only native land-based mammals, so we have to be careful we don't accidentally interfere with their habitat. We have carried out a number of bat surveys and have not identified bats within the project area.

Some schools were particularly interested in the geological aspects of the project as it tied in with the work they were doing in the classroom. We will be visiting those schools again next year and plan to bring along some of the core samples we have taken out of the ground as part of our geotechnical investigations.

We also focused on road safety, particularly around heavy vehicles. Some of our communities will be expecting an influx of people and an increase in heavy traffic. We know our schools are doing a great job already about teaching our children about road safety, so this was an excellent opportunity for us to reinforce those safety messages.



WHAT'S NEXT?

We received great feedback from the schools we visited, so we will continue to visit interested schools throughout the construction phase.

CONTACT US ON

0800 740 560 or tehuaturanga@nzta.govt.nz if you have any questions or require more information.

OUTSIDE THE CLASSROOM

Landowner Stuart Bolton has kindly granted access for site visits by Palmerston North High School. Every year, Stuart (pictured) provides geography students from the school with a fascinating insight into the history and current use of the land. We're there to give students information about the transport corridor and explain where the route will make its way up the Ruahine Ranges.



WHERE DID WE GO?

- Ashhurst School
- Ballance School
- Eketahuna Primary School
- Woodville School
- Pongaroa School
- Makuri School
- Hiwinui School
- Papatawa School
- Kumeroa School
- Bush Area Families Teaching at Home (BAFTAH)

IMAGINATIONS RUN WILD

Check out some of the entries from our drawing competition. We asked students to imagine how the new transport corridor could look. We've seen some really great ideas so far! The most creative and runner up entry from each school won book vouchers.



Please contact us on tehuaturanga@nzta.govt.nz if your school would like to be updated on the project.